

that are happening. And I want to pay attention to the good things that are happening for a lot of children who come from some tough backgrounds and tough opportunities who are already achieving. ACT scores are up. Students are taking more AP exams.

I would share with the gentleman what an AP exam is. When people say what does that acronym mean, it really means an advanced placement course for a student who is in high school. Let us say the school only offers a second year of algebra and the student wants to take physics or something else. They can actually take an advanced placement through a mailing and then they can take that test. It is a college level course at high school, and some students can take several courses, saving a lot of money when they get to the university. And we are seeing that improved tremendously.

Another point I would make before I yield is that we are all concerned that our schools be totally safe, every one of them. And we want that, and we should. But the truth is violence is down in our public schools dramatically; and public school teachers, by all the statistics out, are really better educated than they have ever been. And, on average, they are better educated than many of them who are in some of the private schools we have in this country. More students out of our public schools are going to the universities.

What folks forget is that we have more children in public schools today than we have ever had in the history of this country. Now, the challenge we face is if we have more people, guess what that is going to mean? Our resources are strained because classes are more cramped, we need more teachers, we need all the things to support them, and if we are going to have smaller class sizes, we have to run faster just to keep up. And that is the point the gentleman was making, as we start trying to encourage young people to get into the professions that they may not have thought about.

One of the points the gentleman made as we were talking earlier, and the gentleman is absolutely right, is that the challenge we face today is recruiting people to teach our young people. How do we recruit the quality people we need to get there? There was a time in this country when we had a fairly adequate supply of teachers. Unfortunately, it was a time when the opportunities for women were not what they are today, because they either went into nursing, clerical jobs, or into teaching, and we were blessed by that.

But once we opened the doors to all professions, and we should have, not only for women but all others, that then made the job of retaining and attracting the people we need in education and in nursing, as the gentleman mentioned earlier, more difficult. This means that we have to pay more attention to making sure that those professions not only are attrac-

tive but the conditions they work under are also attractive.

And number three, we must pay them an adequate wage. We can no longer say that they cannot move from point A to point B. They are going to move. My son teaches school. It costs him just as much to buy a loaf of bread in the local store as it does the president of a local bank that may make four or five times as much. Now, obviously, people go into education or nursing or into professions or rescue squads or fire departments to make a difference, and we are talking about education.

□ 1715

The truth is we have to start valuing and honoring those teachers and say to them, you do a good job, we appreciate what you are doing, instead of beating up on them all the time.

I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I was just thinking about what you were saying. It is important that we do pay our teachers wages that are reasonable and that they can live off of. There was just an article in the paper in Baltimore that stated that as we move towards September, the September opening of school, we have a teacher shortage and we are doing everything in our power to find teachers. But one of the things that is for sure, we have got to pay them. We have got to pay them well.

I want to go back to something you said about conditions of teaching. I was talking to some friends of mine who teach in private school. The interesting thing to note is that these folks were actually making a little less than they would make in public school. I said to them, why did you make that change? They said, because of the conditions. They were able to teach smaller classes. Their hearts are into making sure that every child succeeds, that no child is left behind, and they felt that the conditions, if it got to 34 or 35 kids in a class that trying to teach it was very, very difficult, not that they did not want to do a good job but it was very hard to be effective.

I agree with you. One of the things that I was thinking about, too, as you were talking is that in Baltimore, one of our first high schools to get blue ribbon status was a school that I graduated from in high school that just got this national blue ribbon status, Baltimore City College High School. One of the things you were talking about a little earlier was the advanced courses, college courses. What that goes to is high standards, high standards and high expectations. I did not want to let that go by.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. For all children.

Mr. CUMMINGS. For all children. I think what happens so often is that if you have low expectations, then children do not even know the standard to even reach for the high expectations. But one of the things that I have noticed, you and I had a discussion not

long ago about when we go into our schools and what makes a good school, what do you see in a school, what do you experience in a school when you are visiting that tells you without anybody showing you any scores that it is a great school? One of the things that we talked about was that you had a strong principal. You had excitement. You could just see it on all the walls, the bulletin boards, that things were happening. But there was also an air of high expectations. I think that that is one of the things that we have got to get back to, that high expectation. When you talk about the schools that you have just talked about doing better, that sends a message to other schools and it says, if they can do it 20 miles down the road, we can do it, too. When Baltimore City College High School in Baltimore became one of the few predominantly African American schools in the country to become a national blue ribbon school, not only did it mean a lot to the students at that school but it meant a lot to the entire community. There were other students who were at other schools similar to Baltimore City College High School saying, we can do it, too.

We have got to get back to that, to that positive role model stuff. A lot of times we hear about negative role models. I think years ago you had a lot of positive role models. There are a lot of positive role models today, in students, in schools, in neighbors. I think the things that we are talking about today are the good things about our schools. You are right. We hear so much negative, negative, negative but there are so many wonderful things happening since the last time you and I discussed this, because we have seen some smaller class sizes, we have seen our children in like the first, second and third grade, we have seen their scores going up in Baltimore, too, substantially.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. That is absolutely right. That is why it is imperative that this Congress not go back on the commitment they made and to keep putting that money in there. All of us use the language of the new economy. It is true, it is propelling our business cycles, everything is revolving around it but we have got to provide national leadership in this vital area of education, so that everyone can be a part of this new economy. We cannot leave people behind. If we do not make sure that every child gets a good education, that we set high standards, we have high expectations, they will not be a part of it. If you deny in my opinion a child an education, a quality education, you have denied the whole family of that because once they get married, you have created a whole second class citizenship for those children. Across this country, the American people are calling out for greater investment in public education. They do not care whether it comes from Washington or their State capital or the local. They want the investment in education. When we invest that money,